

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A lasso for securing an object to be monitored, said lasso comprising:

a flexible cord having a length and first and second free ends; and

a connector having a body with at least one opening therethrough,

a portion of the flexible cord between the first and second free ends directed through the at least one opening so that the connector and the portion of the flexible cord define a closed first loop with an effective diameter,

the portion of the flexible cord ~~configurable to be in~~ generally a U-shaped configuration with a base and first and second legs which each project through the at least one opening,

at least one of the first and second legs movable relative to the connector so that the effective diameter of the closed first loop is variable,

the first free end of the flexible cord directed through the closed first loop so as to define a closed second loop with an effective diameter that is variable by selectively oppositely moving the flexible cord through the closed first loop.

2. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 1 wherein the first free end of the flexible cord is attached to a fixed support.

3. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 1 wherein the second free end of the flexible cord has an enlargement thereon which

cannot be drawn through the at least one opening on the connector to open the closed first loop.

4. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 1 wherein the body of the connector comprises a flat plate through which the at least one opening is formed.

5. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 4 wherein the at least one opening comprises a single opening within which the first and second legs reside.

6. (currently amended) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim [[5]] 1 wherein the at least one opening comprises a single opening has an elongate shape into which the base and first and second legs can be directed by movement, base first, into the single opening with the base and first and second legs in the U-shaped configuration.

7. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 3 wherein the enlargement is defined by a separate element that is fixedly attached to the flexible cord.

8. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 1 wherein the flexible cord comprises a braided cable.

9. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 1 wherein the flexible cord comprises an electrical conductor that defines a conductive path between the first and second free ends of the flexible cord.

10. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 1 in combination with a fixed support to which the first free end of the flexible cord is secured.

11. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 9 in combination with an alarm system capable of producing a detectable signal in the event that the conductive path between the first and second free ends of the flexible cord is interrupted.

12. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 1 in combination with an object having a fully surrounded opening and the portion of the flexible cord extends through the fully surrounded opening.

13. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 8 wherein the braided cable is surrounded by a non-metal sheath.

14. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 7 wherein the separate element is crimped to the flexible cord.

15. (currently amended) A lasso for securing an object to be monitored, said lasso comprising:

a flexible cord having a length and first and second free ends; and
a connector having a body with at least one opening therethrough,
a portion of the flexible cord between the first and second free ends directed through the at least one opening so that the connector and the portion of the flexible cord define a closed first loop with an effective diameter,

the portion of the flexible cord ~~configurable to be in~~ generally a U-shaped configuration with a base and first and second legs which each project through the at least one opening,

the first and second legs each movable relative to the connector so that the effective diameter of the closed first loop is variable,

the first free end of the flexible cord directed through the closed first loop so as to define a closed second loop with an effective diameter that is variable by selectively oppositely moving the flexible cord through the closed first loop.

16. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 15 wherein the second free end of the flexible cord has an enlargement thereon which

cannot be drawn through the at least one opening on the connector to open the closed first loop.

17. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 15 wherein the flexible cord comprises an electrical conductor that defines a conductive path between the first and second free ends of the flexible cord.

18. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 15 in combination with a fixed support to which the first free end of the flexible cord is secured.

19. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 17 in combination with an alarm system capable of producing a detectable signal in the event that the conductive path between the first and second free ends of the flexible cord is interrupted.

20. (original) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 15 in combination with an object having a fully surrounded opening and the portion of the flexible cord extends through the fully surrounded opening.

21. (currently amended) A method of securing an object to be monitored, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a flexible cord having a length and first and second free ends;

providing a connector having at least one opening therethrough;

directing a portion of the flexible cord between the first and second free ends through the at least one opening so that the connector and the portion of the flexible cord define a closed first loop with a ~~variable~~ diameter that is variable by sliding the flexible cord through the at least one opening;

directing the first free end of the flexible cord around at least a part of an object and through the closed first loop to lasso the part of the object,

the first free end of the flexible cord directed through the closed first loop with the flexible cord remaining slidable through the at least one opening such that the diameter of the closed first loop can be varied as the first free end of the flexible cord is directed through the closed first loop; and

securing the first free end of the flexible cord to a support after the first free end of the flexible cord is directed through the closed first loop.

22. (currently amended) The method of securing an object to be monitored according to claim 21 wherein the portion of the flexible cord has a U shape with a base and first and second legs, the step of directing the portion of the flexible cord through the at least one opening comprises ~~pre-forming~~ pre-forming the portion of the flexible cord into the U shape and directing the pre-formed portion of the flexible cord base first through the at least one opening.

23. (original) The method of securing an object to be monitored according to claim 22 further comprising the step of securing an element to the flexible cord that cannot be withdraw from the at least one opening to open the closed first loop.

24. (original) The method of securing an object to be monitored according to claim 22 wherein the step of providing a connector comprises providing a connector with a single opening through which the first and second legs of the flexible cord extend.

25. (original) The method of securing an object to be monitored according to claim 21 wherein the step of providing a connector comprises providing a flat element with a single opening therein to accept the portion of the flexible cord.

26. (original) The method of securing an object to be monitored according to claim 21 further comprising the step of connecting the flexible cord to an alarm system capable of producing a detectable signal in the event that the flexible cord is severed between the first and second ends.

27. (new) A method of securing an object to be monitored, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a flexible cord having a length and first and second free ends;

providing a connector having at least one opening therethrough;

directing a portion of the flexible cord between the first and second free ends through the at least one opening so that the connector and the portion of the flexible cord define a closed first loop with a variable diameter;

directing the first free end of the flexible cord around at least a part of an object and through the closed first loop to lasso the part of the object; and

securing the first free end of the flexible cord to a support after the first free end of the flexible cord is directed through the closed first loop,

wherein the portion of the flexible cord has a U shape with a base and first and second legs and the step of directing the portion of the flexible cord through the at least one opening comprises pre-forming the portion of the flexible cord into the U shape and directing the pre-formed portion of the flexible cord base first through the at least one opening.

28. (new) A method of securing an object to be monitored, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a flexible cord having a length and first and second free ends;

providing a connector having at least one opening therethrough;

directing a portion of the flexible cord between the first and second free ends through the at least one opening so that the connector and the portion of the flexible cord define a closed first loop with a variable diameter;

directing the first free end of the flexible cord around at least a part of an object and through the closed first loop to lasso the part of the object; and

securing the first free end of the flexible cord to a support after the first free end of the flexible cord is directed through the closed first loop,

wherein the step of providing a connector comprises providing a connector with a single opening through which the first and second legs of the flexible cord extend.

29. (new) The lasso for securing an object to be monitored according to claim 15 wherein the at least one opening comprises a single opening into which the base and first and second legs can be directed by movement, base first, into the single opening with the base and first and second legs in the U-shaped configuration.